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Students choices vary in finals study spots

Jena Sauber
junior staff writer

With thousands of K-State students hitting the books in the next few days, finding a quiet spot to study may become difficult. If Hale is full and your residence hall is noisy, check out the following hot spots to hit the books.

School of Leadership Studies

Looking for a brand new study spot? Stop by the School of Leadership Studies building. The first floor includes Radina's coffee shop, which offers a selection of drinks and food, and both an indoor and an outdoor fireplace. On the second floor, two "tree house" areas offer comfortable seating with space for your laptop and books, and a wide view of campus. The entire building is equipped with wireless Internet and other technology.

"The tree house is equipped with a Smartboard, whereas other seating areas have whiteboards," said Lori Kniffin, building manager for the School of Leadership Studies.

Kniffin encouraged students to use the Leadership Studies Building for studying, especially during finals week.

"The School of Leadership Studies faculty and staff greatly value their relationship with students ... all K-State students are welcome to come and study at the Leadership Studies Building anytime, including finals week," Kniffin said.

The School of Leadership Studies Building is open Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Radina's opens on weekdays at 7 a.m., closing Monday and Tuesday at 9 p.m., Wednesday and Thursday at 5 p.m. and Friday at 1 p.m.

Beach Museum of Art

Although it is on the very corner of campus, the Beach Museum of Art features a nice sized study hall on the second floor. If you are looking for a quiet, calm place with an aesthetically pleasing view to study, check out the museum. Students are also encouraged to look at the exhibits while studying at the museum.

"It's not a heavily studied area, but I would encourage students to come study here, and to take a look around the museum," said Joshua Schneider, secretary at the museum.

The museum is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m. on Sundays. It is closed Mondays and Tuesdays. Food and drink are welcome in the study area.

The K-State Student Union

While the main floor of the Union is sometimes busy, there are more comfortable, quieter places to study on the second floor. Overstuffed chairs and tables provide comfortable places to spread out and study. Fast food stations, the Cats' Den convenience store and the Union Bookstore can keep you full, awake and supplied while studying. If you are looking for a break, the bowling alley is just downstairs. The Union is open daily from 7:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. and has wireless Internet access.

"The Union is a great place to study. The combination of coffee and Chinese food work wonders to stimulate your brain cells ... and let's not forget about the healthy atmosphere," said Adrian Nethercot, freshman in athletic training.

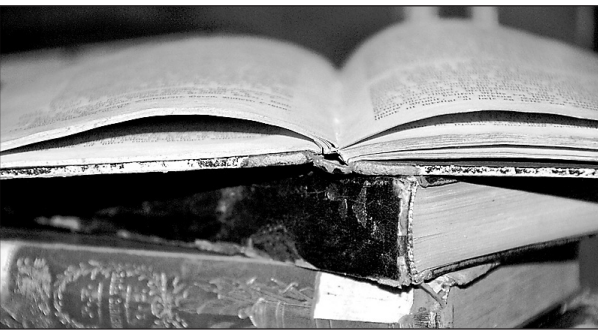
RESULTS MAY VARY

Toxic trash, brain torture and finals week woes



Q: I've been studying for seven hours and my brain isn't absorbing the information well enough, what can I do to make it remember things?

A: Don't cram-study for seven hours straight. Break it up a bit with short study breaks. Your brain can only absorb so much new information at a time. Keep in mind, the term "study break" doesn't mean study for 20 minutes and then play video games for 2 hours. Schedule shorter breaks to give your brain a rest, but don't get sucked away from studying for too long. You know exactly what I am talking about. Everyone has had one of those endless I-meant-to-just-take-a-quick-study-break-but-it-turned-into-a-Walmart-trip-which-



turned-into-a-food-run-etc.-etc. study breaks. Try to avoid those.

Don't panic. Panicking about exams will not improve your capacity to function, it will only distract you. You don't want to blow off your finals either, but stressing yourself out will not help.

Try to continue using familiar and effective study skills. If you always make flashcards and they have helped you to do well on previous tests — then make flashcards. If using flashcards have never, ever helped you, there is no reason to start making them now, even if the cute girl sitting next to you in Hale Library has cutesy-color-coded-cards. Everyone learns differently.

Above all else, if you want to help your brain out, go to sleep. Pulling an all-nighter for studying is almost never worth it; for finishing a project, eh, maybe so. But not for studying. At a certain point during the night, the benefits of going to bed outweigh the benefits of continuing to cram. For me, this point is about 2 a.m. My ability to focus is usually kaput by then, and my brain will get more out of sleeping then it will by

continuing to stare blankly at my notes. You will perform better on your tests if you are well rested.

Sleep deprivation is used as a torture technique. Don't torture your brain. Be nice to your brain. You will need it to pass your finals.

Q: All this talk about finals is too stressful for me, what can I do to get away from it?

A: Plug your ears. Or suck it up and study, so you can pass your classes, get your degree and never have to worry about final exams again.

Q: In what condition should I leave my room in the residence hall before I leave it for an entire month?

A: Take out your trash. I repeat, take out your trash. I cannot stress this enough. If you leave your trash in your room, it will rot and smell disgusting. And when you return in January, your roommate will hate you. And everyone in your wing will hate you. And your room will forever smell like rotten trash. And you may die of the toxic fumes. And you will have no one to blame but yourself. So, take out your trash.

Also, your resident assistant will leave a cute little piece of paper taped to your door with a list of things to do before you leave for break, such as unplugging electronics, shutting the window, taking out your trash, taking home your pets, etc. Do yourself a favor and follow the



photos courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

checklist. Your RA will really appreciate it, and therefore spare your life.

Lastly, don't be a dummy and leave contraband items in your room. Better yet, don't have them there in the first place.

Q: How many Monsters can I safely consume in an hour? Also, do you know where to get any Adderall?

A: Heh. If you have reached this point in your studies, it is time for you to go to bed.

Sara Gudde is a senior in secondary education. She has survived six finals weeks to date. Questions for this installment of "Results May Vary" came from the Collegian editorial board, which may or may not have committed one or more of the errors you now don't have to make, thanks to Sara Gudde's advice. Please send questions for Sara to edge@spub.ksu.edu.

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8. Carry your gear on the trail in this.
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Preparing months in advance best bet, cramming possible though



Finals week is here and it is worse than a twilight visit from Freddy Krueger. The old saying goes, “The only two certainties in life are death and taxes.” For students, finals are just as sure as the other two and easily as atrocious. However, there are ways to survive this horrible seven-day stretch of a nightmare. For some students the challenge will come easily; for others, it will be tough, but getting over the hill and reaching the bliss that is winter break is accomplishable with good grades intact.

Lessons learned

The key in achieving excellence actually begins weeks, if not months before finals week. Gloria Freeland, director for the Huck Boyd National Center for Community Media and assistant professor of journalism and mass communications, said time management throughout the whole semester and finals week is crucial. “My advice for students is not to cram for finals,” Freeland said. “It comes down to being able to manage your time throughout the semester. When I was a student, I always felt that if I didn’t know the material by the time finals came around, that I’d never know it.” What is important for finals, especially for freshmen, are the

lessons to learn from the week. More often than not, students find themselves in bad situations a couple times throughout their academic careers due to inadequate preparation and procrastination. Even after a successful semester, bad choices to procrastinate and ineffective studying methods — like cramming — can cost students As and Bs and turn them into Cs and Ds. With finals that can range from 20 to 50 percent of your grade, this week is make or break for many students. Pat Bosco, vice president for student life, reminisced on his time at K-State as a student. As a former crammer, he wouldn’t recommend it. He said that for some students, it is simply too late — but it is not too late to learn from mistakes and start new, more academically healthy habits. “Develop a list of behaviors that you will not engage in next semester so you will be prepared and you don’t get that bad feeling in your tummy when finals week comes,” Bosco said. “You need to pledge to yourself that you are never going to do this again and put yourself in this situation. That means going to class, get a tutor before the finals week and developing a good relationship with your professor at the beginning of the course.” Bosco preached responsibility. After finals week, he said to take that list of bad behaviors you won’t do again and keep it on the refrigerator as a constant reminder of where you were and where you do not want to be again. However, he also remembered how much of a pain finals week was as a student and felt sympathetic to all that had to endure the coming week.

“I was always the student who had a final that I needed to keep my grade at a certain point,” Bosco said. “Finals week was not the best in my academic career, so I wish my students the best of luck ... pray.”

Ways to cope

Both Freeland and Bosco suggested that another key to success in finals week is taking the time to relieve stress and escape the horrors of marathon studying sessions. Freeland said making sure one had enough time to get adequate sleep was very important and what was also important was taking the time to step back and look at the big picture: the holidays are around the corner. Take some time out of studying to go look at some Christmas lights, take care of some holiday shopping or turn on the TV and watch “Santa Claus Conquers the Martians” — great movie. Bosco said taking time away from the library to go hang and bang some weights is another excellent stress reliever and a venue to get your mind off of books and studies for a little while. It is never too late to start getting ready for spring break. As a redshirt senior — I prefer this term to fifth-year senior — I have been around the block nine times now and have played this deadly game of finals. Bosco and Freeland’s advice is sage, and I know this now after years of procrastinating until finals week. But how is that advice going to help you when it’s finals week and for the last month you have been going out Wednesday through Sunday? It won’t.


What to do now


I am here to tell you that cramming is possible. Not conducive, but very possible. Heading into this week, if you are starting to learn the material that will be on your finals cold turkey, you must realize that all of the information you cram into your cranium will leak out of your earlobes within a couple of days after the test. But that’s not important now; getting the grade is. First, understand that this week will be absolutely terrible. If you have put yourself in the situation where you cannot undergo any leisure activity except study for your life, then you have got to do what you need to do. From the darkened desk in your room, to the final days of class, and to the library aren’t exactly the most diverse and best changes in scenery, but accept them. It is your prison for a week. I have been in the library for nearly 24 hours straight a time or two in my years here. The best thing to do is take a minute to sit back and breathe. Realize that this is all over in a week. The easy route is just to put the books down, but your grades are forever. Realize that. Next, stimulants can be a studyaholic’s dream. Coffee and Rockstar can help propel you past that last part of the study guide as you’re running on empty. Do not purchase anything expecting it to be a cure-all for your problems. And do not go days without sleeping. Without sleep, your body is much more likely to forget the information that was recently shoved in your head. Also, rewrite your notes and PowerPoint slides, and work everything out on paper again. You are much more likely to

remember something by writing it down and by repetition instead of just glancing at notes as you click a button on the mouse or turn the page. Finally, plan something really nice for yourself when you finish the hellacious week. Don’t cry, fret or stress more because you see a mountain in front of you. No amount of tears will change the situation you are in, but diligent studying will. If you really mess up,

K-State will allow you to retake the class and change the grade in the future. Good luck and Godspeed; I’m right there with you. I’ve already spent too much time writing this article when I could’ve been writing note cards. Daniel Stewart is senior in journalism and mass communications. Please send comments to news@spub.ksu.edu.

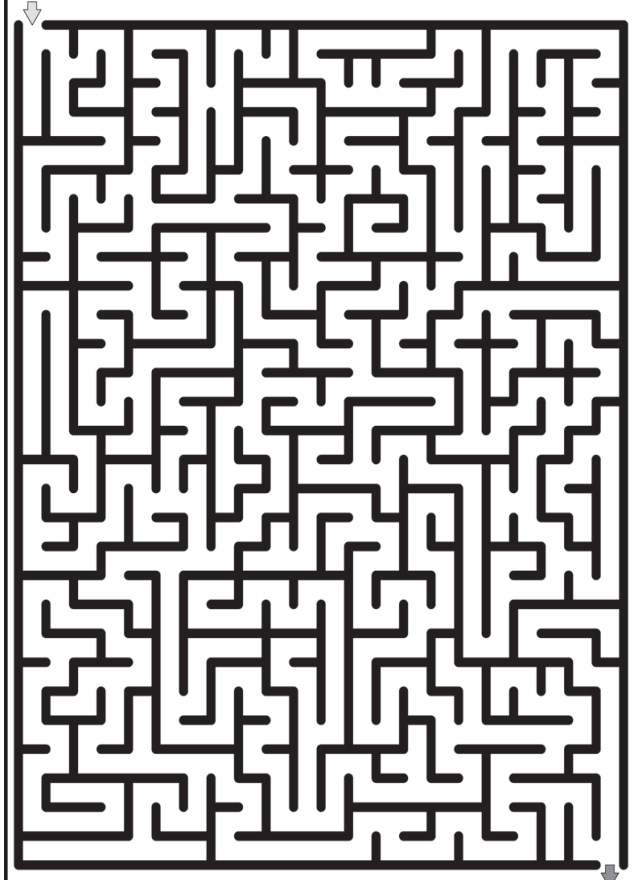
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Hale helps students get through finals week

Library offers free coffee, snack nights

Katie Reilley
junior staff writer

Need a caffeine fix while studying for finals? Instead of walking down a flight of stairs to Einstein Brothers, get free coffee and snacks on the second floor of Hale library tonight and Tuesday night from 10 p.m. to midnight during the K-State Libraries-sponsored event, Caffeine Fix.

Caffeine Fix began five years ago in an effort to cause less “chaos” in the library with people trying to order out food and disgruntled, hungry students, said Donna Ekart, communications coordinator for K-State Libraries.

Ekart said the event, which started out as a simple event in years past, has grown, and she, along with the event organizer and undergraduate and community services librarian, Jason Coleman, anticipate a couple hundred students a night.

Coleman said the library plans to hand out chips, Slim Jim snacks, coffee, tea and hot cocoa to students. The coffee will be made in-house.

“This year, we’ll just be doing it on the second floor,” Ekart said. “That’s where everybody is. That way nobody has to lose their table or their computer. If we have it upstairs, people have to get up and lose their chairs, which is deadly.”

Library volunteers will serve students from the check-out window. In years past, Ekart said, lines have extended from the check-out window to the bottom-level Sunflower Entrance.

Roberta Johnson, director of financial services for K-State Libraries, said they have budgeted up to \$250 for Caffeine Fix to “help make studying better or easier” for students.

Need energy, memory for finals? Try oatmeal, chocolate

Hungry students can eat selectively for benefits

Amy Himmelberg
junior staff writer

When studying for finals, many students crave something to snack on but also want to make sure the foods they eat contribute positively to their studying. Here are some snacks that will do just that.

Energy for an all night study session

Try:

- Yogurt: According to Georgetown University, one cup contains at least 8 grams of protein, which controls metabolic reactions and can prevent your body from becoming easily fatigued by producing stamina and energy.
- Oatmeal: This is a naturally high-octane food that is also high in complex carbohydrates and fiber. According to [webmd.com](#), carbohydrates are the body’s preferred source of fuel. In addition, the body absorbs whole grains more slowly, keeping blood sugar and energy levels stable. And fiber is an energy stabilizer that slows digestion, providing a more steady supply of energy throughout the day.
- Sunflower seeds: these seeds are high in iron, an essential nutrient necessary to for transporting oxygen in the body. In each cell, oxygen is used to release maximum energy from the food that we eat. Without sufficient iron, the body produces fewer and smaller red blood cells, resulting in less oxygen flow to the cells and less energy.

Extra credit:

According to K-State Extension associate of animal sciences and industry Karen Blakeslee, “It is important to always eat something for breakfast. Even if it is a bowl of cereal. It gives the brain fuel so you don’t get tired during the morning. Plus, it helps you not to overeat the rest of the day.”

Make a snack:

- Frozen yogurt
- Sprinkle oats over fruit or bake into cookies
- Mix sunflower seeds into



photo illustration by Matt Binter

cold cereal for extra crunch

Something to calm your nerves and de-stress

Try:

- Almonds: [physician.com](#) promises this snack packs a healthy punch with the help of riboflavin, which may reduce the frequency of migraines, magnesium which regulates blood pressure, zinc which has been shown to fight negative effects of stress and serotonin which balances mood and stress.
- Orange juice: Because it contains high levels of vitamin C, it naturally fights the excretion of cortisol, a hormone responsible for letting the body know it is experiencing stress and for the body’s “flight or fight” response to stressful situations.
- String cheese: This classic lunch box favorite turns out to be high in tryptophan, an amino acid that helps the brain produce serotonin, a chemical that calms you down, and melatonin, a hormone that can make you sleepy. This means it’s not only great for relaxing, it’s

also a natural sleep aid and has even been shown to ease symptoms of depression and seasonal affective disorder.

Extra credits:

Casey Weber, professor of human nutrition, said students frequently underestimate the importance of staying hydrated.

“Even a two percent loss of water can result in reduced metabolic rate and potential sluggishness. Most will do just the opposite consume large quantities of caffeinated beverages. It’s important to remember they are providing stimulants (calories) more than actually energy,” Weber said.

She added calories from caffeinated beverages often absorb quickly then produce an “insulin spike” — followed by a crash.

“Plus, stimulants are diuretics,” Weber said. “Some caffeine is found to be effective and increase cognitive function as well as performance, but it can go overboard just as easily, so caution should be used. For most people four cups of coffee is going to be their limit, but for

those who don’t drink coffee their limit will be much less.”

Make a snack:

- Use orange juice instead of milk to make a smoothie
- Mix some almonds into your popcorn for a twist on a classic snack

A sharp memory for the day of the test

-Chocolate: [onlineuniversity.com](#) boasts that not only does chocolate have natural serotonin content, helping to boost your mood, but it also increases ability to remember things. This is because chocolate contains epicatechin, which has been found to help improve blood flow to the brain, thus improving memory function. Aside from that, most chocolate contains caffeine, which makes you alert, making you study more effectively and retain more information.

- Nuts: munching on cashews, peanuts, walnuts or pecans may help you better retain what you are reading. This is because nuts are a good source of omega fatty acids, which is a crucial part

of a normally functioning brain. Also, they are rich in iron, which helps in carrying oxygen in the blood. With sufficient oxygen in the blood, fresh oxygen is supplied to the brain, so you stay alert and your memory is enhanced.

- Apples: Apples contain an antioxidant called quercetin, which is thought to help prevent Alzheimer’s disease. In addition, it has also been found to help boost your memory. While this antioxidant is also found in the flesh of the apple, it is more concentrated on the skin, so skip peeling your apple.

Extra credit:

“Nutritionally speaking, eating balanced diet with 5-6 small meals will be helpful in maintaining energy levels. These should include complex carbs for lasting energy and fiber to help you feel full and stimulate satiety,” Weber said.

Make a snack:

- Trail mix
- Chocolate and fruit fondue
- Sprinkle walnuts in a salad or eat the peanuts right out of the bag like your at a baseball game

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Plans, snacks can help with headaches

Lisa Barry
junior staff writer

It's crunch time. Final projects, papers and tests are staring at you, begging to be worked on and studied for, but somehow, the reality of the rest of your life does not seem to slow down.

Your boss still expects you to come in to work, you have to eat some semblance of meals at least a couple times each day and you have to make

time for those phone calls from your mom who wants to know how studying is going, if you're getting enough sleep and, of course, when you plan on being home because she needs you to bake 18 dozen cookies before your family arrives from out of town.

To help take away the headaches that can come with the last couple weeks of the semester, here is a list of five tips and tricks to help the upcoming days go a little smoother.

1. Plan it Out:

Recurring nightmares of missing a final exam is a story told over and over by college students. Nix any chance of final faux pas by writing out a calendar. Plot out each exam on your calendar and then build your study time around those exams. Write down the times you plan to study for specific exams and work on specific papers or projects. Stick to this schedule and cross items off your calendar as you go.

2. Prioritize:

Take a look at your current grades in each class and calculate what grade you need to have on each final in order to be satisfied when your semester grades are released.

While it is ideal to spend enough time preparing to ace each exam, the reality for some is that prioritizing is a necessity. If you have a solid A in a class where you already have a good grasp on the material and are unlikely to drop to a B, it is a good idea to spend more time trying to bump that C+ to a B in that class you don't understand as well.

3. Snooze:

Even though it may seem like you need 25 hours each day anyway, sleep is essential. The Division of Sleep Medicine at Harvard Medical School did a study that proved sleep is beneficial in learning.

The study said, "First, a sleep-deprived person cannot focus attention optimally and therefore cannot learn efficiently. Second, sleep itself has a role in the consolidation of memory, which is essential for learning new information."

So go back to your calendar and plan some snooze time, but beware of the snooze button when the alarm does go off.

4. Smart Snacking:

Though it may be quick and easy to drive through McDonald's everyday to grab a Big Mac for lunch, this may not be the best decision. Studying takes a lot of energy and requires a lot of memory power. There are certain foods that assist in both of the aforementioned areas.

According to *edu-ceter.org*, fish is one of the best study foods out there. Fish is high in Omega-3 fatty acids which has many benefits including better brain function and higher intelligence. Fruits, vegetables, nuts and even chocolate in small doses, can all improve study habits. For more information on smart snacking, visit *edu-center.org* or *onlineuniversityload.com*.

5. Reward Yourself:

There is nothing worse than suffering from burnout before finals are even over. Make time to take short breaks and participate in activities you enjoy. Exercise is one way to boost your energy levels and get a better nights rest according to *mayoclinic.com*. Even short breaks to play a video game or chat with a friend can be a positive way to keep your sanity as long as you always remember to return to your studies in a timely manner.

Each of these tips provides a positive way to increase your chances of succeeding during finals week, but it all comes down to knowing yourself and your own study habits. As you see the end is approaching, do not lose steam on a semester in which you have already put forth so much work and effort. Use your resources and push through the last days of school and when it is all over, sit back and enjoy your break.

Exams provide opportunity for students



Beth Mendenhall

There are two types of people at K-State: the students and the tourists. If you don't know what I mean, you're probably a tourist. If you're reading this in class, you're definitely a tourist. If you're dreading finals week, it just might mean you're a tourist.

Now perhaps I'm making too bold an assumption about the obviousness of this dichotomy. The student wants to be here. Students enjoy or appreciate what they're studying, care about their grades and think about the future. Students do not fail classes if they can help it. Students have checked out a book from the library, attended a campus lecture and gotten out of bed before noon.

Tourists, not so much. A tourist is someone who doesn't know why they're here, except they didn't know what else to do and their parents pushed them in the university's general direction.

A tourist doesn't go to class except for the test, and is more likely to be Facebooking or playing Sudoku than taking notes. A tourist is good for two

things: throwing a kegger and convincing professors that they should implement a curve.

Everything I say henceforth assumes you are a student, and that you care about learning and succeeding. If you're a student, you should relish finals week rather than dread it for three reasons: finals provide a chance to earn the grade you deserve, foster solidarity among K-State students and distinguish between the people who are serious and those who are a waste of space. If you're not persuaded by these arguments, maybe you should think hard about whether it's because you are a tourist.

Any seasoned student, teacher and especially tutor know the importance of a clear and accurate syllabus. But despite the universally loved syllabus-day that wakes us from our summer slumber, most don't pay much attention to the grade breakdown until right before finals. That's the time to calculate what you need to get on the final to achieve the grade you want.

The good thing about finals is they usually count for enough of your grade to really make a difference, which means one of two things for a student: Either your grade sucks and you can substantially improve it with one or two solid weeks of studying, or it rocks and you don't need to do well on the final to keep it and don't need to study much anyway because you already know the material.

In other words, finals let you choose whichever study strategy works for you: long and consistent over the course of the semester, or a study binge right at the end. If you can't do either, you're probably playing too much Xbox.

The only thing every K-State student has in common is each one is a K-State student. Tautology though it might be, this tells us something important about the value of finals week: it's our common enemy.

D. Keith Denton, in his 1993 article in *Competitiveness Review*, said what many corporations already know — if people do not have a natural enemy, they will create one. A common enemy is critical to group cohesion. Finals are no exception, as anyone who has taken solace in late-night library commiseration can attest.

Lastly, finals are a great way to root out the dead weight. Sure, you will get to use a book and a calculator in real life, but if you can do without you'll be a more efficient and productive employee or employer.

And to be honest, finals shouldn't be that hard if you've been paying attention. Some might say we need the tourists in order to make life easier on the good students in terms of grades and relative accomplishments, but I'd prefer to rid our graduates of the grade inflation that makes a 4.0 at K-State nothing compared to a 4.0 at Harvard.

Perhaps I'm right, and finals are objectively good, or perhaps I'm wrong. I honestly don't know that it matters much either way, because while attitudes differ about the benefit and value of a stressful finals week, we can all agree on one thing: finals are inevitable.

Beth Mendenhall is a senior in political science and philosophy. Please send comments to opinion@spub.ksu.edu.

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	2			3	9
9			3	8	2
	1		6		7
	9	5	6		
	3			2	
				7	4
6			8	1	
1		5	9		7
8	4				5

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Rules: Fill in the grid so that each row, column, and 3x3 block contains 1-9 exactly once.

1	9	8	4	6	3	5	7	2
7	2	5	8	1	9	4	3	6
4	6	3	7	5	2	1	8	9
5	8	6	3	9	1	2	4	7
9	3	4	2	7	6	8	5	1
2	1	7	5	8	4	9	6	3
8	7	9	6	2	5	3	1	4
6	4	2	1	3	8	7	9	5
3	5	1	9	4	7	6	2	8

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Bottom: Many students were studying inside Hale Library on Saturday afternoon. With finals approaching, the library will be a busy place with students preparing for exams.

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